

Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory

CODIS Administrative Manual

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1. OVERVIEW OF THE DNA IDENTIFICATION REGISTRATION SYSTEM AND COMBINED DNA INDEX SYSTEM (CODIS)

1.1 Background

AS 44.41.035 first went into effect on January 1, 1996; authorizing the Alaska Department of Public Safety (AK DPS) to collect a DNA-containing sample (e.g., blood sample, buccal swab, or both), from persons convicted of a crime against another person, for inclusion in a DNA Identification Registration System. The Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory (AK SCDL or Crime Lab) is the entity within the AK DPS responsible for maintaining this database.

The database was originally restricted to felony offenses or felony attempts under AS 11.41 (except AS 11.41.320) or AS 11.46.400. In the following decade, the law was expanded to include misdemeanor crimes against a person, felonies under AS 11 or AS 28.35, equivalent municipal convictions and registered sex offenders. In July 2007, HB90 further amended this law to include adults arrested for qualifying offenses. AS 44.41.035(b) identifies the offenses that qualify an individual for inclusion in the database.

As outlined in AS 44.41.035(f), the DNA Identification Registration System is confidential and may only be used for providing DNA identification for law enforcement purposes and for statistical blind analyses (DB QAS 11.2). Allowing unauthorized access to the database samples or data derived from those samples is a class C felony.

Offenders whose DNA profile is part of the database are entitled to a copy of their DNA profile (DB QAS 11.2.1). When the laboratory receives such a request, a CODIS Administrator or designee will provide the AK SCDL legal assistant with a table of the offender's DNA profile. The legal assistant will then reply to the offender (or the offender's legal representative), releasing the profile to him/her. A record of this communication will be retained electronically, in the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). The Specimen Detail Report from CODIS will not be released to the offender. When access to the database, not permitted by statute, is requested, a CODIS Administrator will promptly notify the Crime Lab legal assistant and the NDIS custodian (DB QAS 11.2).

Law enforcement may request to use an offender sample as a known reference sample in a specific case or set of cases. The laboratory will inform the agency that database samples collected in accordance with AS44.41.035 are intended to provide investigative leads in unsolved cases, not for use as known reference samples. It will be recommended that the agency attempt to obtain a legal sample for use in forensic casework. If this is not possible, and a forensic question sample(s) in the case is eligible

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for CODIS entry, it will be entered into the database and searched against offenders in the database. Matches will be reported as in [Section 3.6](#).

1.2 The Process of DNA Registration

Offender (qualifying convicted offender / qualifying arrestee) DNA samples are collected by correctional centers and law enforcement agencies in Alaska and submitted to the Crime Lab for inclusion in the DNA Identification Registration System. Thumbprints from the offender are collected simultaneously and submitted along with the DNA sample. The AK DPS provides agencies with DNA Database Collection Kits to facilitate the process of DNA and thumbprint collection. Each kit includes a DNA collection card, where the offender's personal information and thumbprints are recorded, and sterile swabs for collecting the DNA sample. Instructions for sample collection and submission are included with each DNA Database Collection Kit. The laboratory has also created a video for training law enforcement in the collection process.

The offender DNA samples and accompanying thumbprints are received by the Crime Lab via U.S. mail or hand delivery. DNA collection kits are typically received in the evidence section, and opened and inspected to assess the integrity of the contents. Samples with questionable integrity are brought to the attention of a CODIS Administrator and may still be suitable for analysis. A CODIS administrator will determine the course of action for samples of questionable integrity.

The DNA Identification Registration System is managed in the LIMS. Offender samples received by the AK SCDL are logged into the LIMS and assigned unique numeric identifiers. Detailed information on this process is contained in the Forensic Science Support / Evidence Control Manual. The LIMS is used to track whether or not an individual's qualifying arrest or conviction has been verified, if the identity of the individual has been verified by the thumbprints, and if the sample has been assigned for analysis and entry into CODIS. The LIMS is also used to track duplicate samples and any CODIS matches associated with a particular sample.

Once the sample is logged into the LIMS, the portion of the DNA collection card containing the offender's thumbprints is separated from the DNA sample. Both portions are barcode labeled with the unique identifier and stored at the laboratory pending analysis, and indefinitely thereafter (exceptions described in [Section 3.2](#)). The portion of the card containing the thumbprints may be temporarily transferred to DPS Records and Identification (R&I) for verification of the offender's identity. Verification is indicated by the date and initials, on the card, of the person performing the identification.

1.3 The Combined DNA Index System (CODIS)

CODIS is a computer database designed to house DNA profiles from convicted offenders, juveniles adjudicated as delinquents, arrestees, unidentified human remains, voluntary donors and forensic samples, in various searchable indices. As previously

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described, Alaska Statute 44.41.035 authorizes the Alaska Department of Public Safety to establish a DNA Identification Registration System containing DNA samples from qualifying arrestees, convicted offenders and certain other individuals. DNA samples from qualifying individuals are analyzed in-house. The resulting genetic profiles are technically reviewed and entered into CODIS.

The CODIS database is comprised of indices at three distinct levels: Local, State, and National. The State DNA Index System (SDIS) for Alaska is located at the Crime Lab. The profiles from samples in the various indices are searched against each other at the state level.

The State of Alaska does not have local (LDIS) laboratories. In states with LDIS labs, profiles are first searched at the local level and then uploaded to the state (SDIS) lab, where they are searched against all eligible profiles within that state.

The National DNA Index System (NDIS) is a centralized index of DNA profiles maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Eligible DNA profiles from offenders (including juveniles and arrestees) and forensic samples believed to be associated with "putative perpetrators" are contributed to NDIS by the state laboratory. The profiles from forensic samples are searched at this level against the Offender Index and against other forensic profiles in the Forensic Index.

As described in the NDIS Procedures Manual and the NDIS Standards for Acceptance of DNA Data, CODIS users who generate data for inclusion in the database are required to complete an annual review of the specimen categories accepted at NDIS, and additional rules governing the upload of data. The annual review and test are completed on the CJIS-WAN (Criminal Justice Information Services Wide Area Network; i.e. the NDIS network). Upon successfully completing the test, the user is able to print out a certificate that will be maintained in the individual's training record in the LIMS. Completion of the review and test are monitored electronically by NDIS and individuals not successfully completing the test by the deadline will be temporarily unable to contribute data to NDIS.

The CODIS software is provided to the AK SCDL by the FBI. Upgrades and modifications to the software are periodically provided to the AK SCDL by the FBI through an FBI contractor. CODIS is a dynamic system, and therefore undergoes both major and minor software upgrades, which may cause the actual operation of the software to vary slightly from what is described in this document. Periodic updates to this manual will be made to accommodate these changes.

The policies, procedures and work instructions outlined in this manual are meant to supplement the NDIS Procedures and applicable federal and state laws. The use of the CODIS system in Alaska is in accordance with the most current versions of this manual, the NDIS Operating Procedures, CODIS User Guide, CODIS Administrator's

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Handbook, CODIS Training Reference Manuals, CODIS Installation support documents, and CODIS Bulletins provided by the FBI and their contractor(s). These references are available to authorized CODIS users on the CJIS-WAN. Portions of this manual are taken from these documents. In accordance with the CODIS License Agreement between DPS and the FBI, the AK SCDL is strictly prohibited from copying or distributing the CODIS software and associated written material to individuals or organizations outside of the department without approval from the FBI.

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2. THE CODIS STATE ADMINISTRATOR

2.1 Duties and Responsibilities

The CODIS State Administrator serves as the manager in charge of the DNA Identification Registration System and the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) at the Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory. At the AK SCDL, one on-site individual serves as the administrator for both casework and database operations (FO QAS 4.1.3; DB QAS 4.1.3). The State Administrator is the central point of contact for CODIS operations in the laboratory and serves as the gatekeeper for DNA data entered into CODIS (from CODIS Administrator's Handbook). The laboratory shall not upload data to NDIS if the administrator position is vacant (FO QAS 5.3.6; DB QAS 5.3.6).

The State CODIS Administrator is responsible for administering the laboratory's CODIS network, scheduling and documenting the CODIS computer training of analysts, assuring that the security and quality of data stored in CODIS is in accordance with state and/or federal law and NDIS operational procedures, and assuring that matches are dispositioned in accordance with NDIS operational procedures (FO QAS 5.3.4; DB QAS 5.3.4). Additional duties are outlined in the CODIS Administrator's Handbook. Administrator functions related to CODIS hardware and software may be delegated to AK DPS IT (Information Technology) staff with CODIS clearance (CODIS IT Users).

If a situation arises that affects the reliability or security of the data and operation of CODIS, the State Administrator has the authority to terminate an analyst's or the laboratory's participation in CODIS until the reliability and security of the computer data can be assured (FO QAS 5.3.5; DB QAS 5.3.5). The DNA technical leader shall inform the CODIS Administrator of all non-administrative discrepancies that affect the typing results or conclusions (in an analyst's proficiency test) at the time of discovery (FO QAS 13.1.9; DB QAS 13.1.9).

The CODIS Administrator shall coordinate with the Technical Leader to appoint a designated individual to serve as an alternate administrator. The alternate administrator will act, if required, in the absence of the State Administrator and may assist the State Administrator with routine management of the CODIS system. This individual must also complete the CODIS User Training Class and the FBI DNA Auditor training.

2.2 Qualifications

The CODIS administrator and alternate must be employees of the AK SCDL (FO QAS 5.3; DB QAS 5.3) and must meet the educational and experience requirements as set forth in standards 5.3 of the both the QAS for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories and the QAS for DNA Databasing Laboratories. The persons must also be current or

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previously qualified casework DNA analysts with documented mixture interpretation training (FO QAS 5.3.2; DB QAS 5.3.2).

The administrator and alternate shall have training on the operation and management of the CODIS system. The FBI auditor training shall be completed within one year of appointment, if not previously attended (FO QAS 5.3.3; DB QAS 5.3.3). The FBI sponsored CODIS software training shall be completed within six months of appointment, if not previously attended (FO QAS 5.3.3; DB QAS 5.3.3).

Additionally, these individuals shall have a minimum of 8 hours of continuing education per calendar year that is relevant to developments in DNA typing (FO QAS 5.1.3.1; DB QAS 5.1.3.1) and shall participate in a program for review of scientific literature (FO QAS 5.1.3.2; DB QAS 5.1.3.2).

The laboratory shall maintain documentation of CODIS administrators that have had their education, experience, and training qualifications evaluated and approved during two external audits (FO QAS 15.2.1; DB QAS 15.2.1).

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3. THE CODIS SOFTWARE

3.1 STR Data Entry

All specimens to be entered into or searched in CODIS shall be subjected to two concordant assessments by a currently qualified analyst and a technical reviewer (FO QAS 12.2.7.2; DB QAS 12.2). Alternatively, the laboratory may use an NDIS approved Expert System package.

The manual technical review of a specimen shall include a review of all notes, worksheets and electronic data supporting the results; a review of all DNA types to verify that they are supported by the raw or analyzed data; a review of all controls, internal lane standards and allelic ladders to verify that the expected results were obtained; and a review to confirm that reworked samples have appropriate controls (DB QAS 12.2). The review of forensic specimens shall also include verification of the profile's eligibility for CODIS, that the correct DNA types are obtained and entered, and a means of assuring that the sample is assigned to the appropriate specimen category (FO QAS 12.2.7). The laboratory shall request appropriate elimination standards prior to entry of forensic unknowns/mixtures into CODIS. This request shall be documented in the LIMS. The technical review of a forensic profile is indicated with the reviewer's initials and date reviewed on the sample electropherogram, review checklist and Specimen Detail Report. The review of offender data is documented with a review checklist. Additional information on the review of casework and offender samples can be found in the Forensic Biology Discipline's Procedures and/or Quality Assurance manuals.

DNA profiles generated at the AK SCDL will be entered into CODIS either via manual entry or as a CMF file (common message format). DNA profiles from casework are entered into CODIS manually via the "STR Data Entry" module. CMF files are used to upload offender batch files to SDIS via Specimen Manager. Each profile entered into CODIS will have a unique Specimen ID (typically the laboratory case and item #) and be assigned to a particular specimen category. The following specimen categories are accepted in Alaska's SDIS: arrestee, biological child, biological father, biological mother, biological sibling, CO duplicate, convicted offender, deduced victim known, detainee, forensic mixture, forensic unknown, maternal relative, missing person, paternal relative, staff (profiles of laboratory staff obtained by written consent), staff duplicate (analyst samples randomly placed in offender batches for quality assurance purposes), unidentified person and volunteer (samples submitted by law enforcement that are accompanied by written consent for entry into the CODIS database).

3.1.1 Exporting offender batches from GeneMapper ID-X and Importing into CODIS

Batches of offender samples analyzed in-house will be exported from GeneMapper ID-X as CMF 3.2 (.xml) files and then imported into SDIS as follows:

- a. If any of the samples to be uploaded had complete locus dropout, do the following before proceeding to step b.
 1. Open the GeneMapper export file in Notepad on the CODIS workstation.
 2. Using the search and replace function, find all <LOCUS/> and leave the replace field blank
 3. Save the modified .xml file.
- b. Open Specimen Manager
- c. Select Import under the File pull down menu or click on the Import CMF File icon on the toolbar.
- d. Select the appropriate CMF file (.xml) and click Open. When prompted, the CODIS User importing the file should enter their User ID and click Enter.
- e. A message will appear indicating that the import file was successfully imported to DNAComm; click OK.
- f. Open DNAComm and select the Import Files tab; double click on the red file.
- g. Select the Import Reports tab; double click on the red file.
- h. The reconciliation report details the samples imported. The CODIS User should check to see that all profiles were successfully uploaded and identify any problem samples, if required. The reconciliation report will be printed and maintained with the offender batch paperwork.
- i. For samples that were manually reviewed, select Yes, if appropriate, for Partial Profile (yes indicates partial data at any core locus; not to be used for complete locus dropout) and enter appropriate comments. Alternatively, this may be done in the STR Data Entry module. Save edits.
- j. Un-mark any profiles not suitable for upload to NDIS.
- k. A CODIS Administrator or another qualified analyst may be consulted to troubleshoot problems with importing offender batches.
- l. Batch paperwork is provided to another qualified analyst for technical review and to a CODIS administrator for administrative review and upload to NDIS.
- m. Prior to NDIS upload, the duplicate offender and AK new search are run. These may be done by an analyst or an administrator. Additional information on offender duplicates searches is contained in [section 3.3.2.1](#) of this manual. Additional information on the AK new search is contained in [section 3.3.2.2](#) of this manual.
- n. Once the samples have been successfully uploaded to NDIS, the paperwork will be returned to the analyst to be filed in LIMS.

3.1.2 Manual Entry of Profiles of Offender Specimens

Profiles of Convicted Offender and Arrestee specimens will be entered into CODIS with a specimen ID that is identical to the unique identifier assigned to the sample upon receipt at the crime lab.

The steps below outline the procedure for manually entering an offender profile into CODIS:

- a. Open STR Data Entry
- b. Enter the numeric Specimen ID
- c. Select the appropriate Specimen Category; Convicted Offender, CO Duplicate (for samples known to have an offender sample already in CODIS) or Arrestee (Samples originally entered as Arrestee should remain in the Arrestee specimen category even if the person is later convicted of the offense for which the arrestee sample was collected.)
- d. The name of the analyst entering the profile will be populated automatically
- e. Case ID is left blank
- f. Select Yes for Source ID
- g. Select Yes or No for Partial Profile (yes indicates partial data at any locus; not to be used for complete locus dropout)
- h. Additional pertinent information may be entered in the Comments field
- i. Enter both the first and second readings, verifying that there are no discrepancies between the readings, and save the entry
- j. Print 2 copies of the Specimen Detail Report.
- k. It is optional to [search the profile at this time using Searcher](#). This may be done using the Search button. Samples not searched manually will be searched as part of the weekly autosearch.

All paperwork generated in the course of profiling offender samples (in casework batches) will be maintained in the offender record in LIMS. One copy of the specimen detail report for each sample entered manually is reviewed (specimen ID, specimen category, source ID, partial profile and data entry) and included with the paperwork in LIMS. A second copy is given to a CODIS Administrator after review has been completed. This signals to the Administrator that the sample may be searched and uploaded to NDIS, if eligible.

3.1.3 CODIS Entry of Data Generated by a Contract Laboratory

The procedure for importing data generated by a contract laboratory will vary depending on the version of the CODIS software and the format in which data is received. Therefore, as needed, detailed procedures will be written that are specific to the

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contract laboratory at the time of analysis. These procedures will be maintained with the data and administrative paperwork associated with the specific contract.

Whenever samples for CODIS are to be analyzed at a vendor laboratory, the AK SCDL's DNA technical leader will document and maintain the approval of the technical specifications of the contract between the AK SCDL and the vendor lab. This approval must occur prior to awarding the contract (FO QAS 17.2; DB QAS 17.2). Additionally, the technical leader will maintain documentation of the vendor laboratory's compliance with the FBI QAS standards and the accreditation requirements of federal law (FO QAS 17.1.1; DB QAS 17.1.1). Similar procedures must be followed if the AK SCDL will be taking ownership of data generated as a result of a contract between a vendor laboratory and a law enforcement agency (FO QAS 17.2.1 and 17.3; DB QAS 17.2.1 and 17.3). An on-site visit of the vendor laboratory will be performed as outlined in standard 17.7 of the QAS for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories (DB QAS 17.4.3).

All data generated by a contract laboratory must be technically reviewed by the AK SCDL prior to entry or searching in CODIS. This review must be performed by an employee of the AK SCDL meeting the requirements in standard 17.6 of the QAS for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories (DB QAS 17.7.2) and will include a review of the elements identified in standard 17.6.1 of the QAS for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories (DB QAS 17.7.1). This review is documented using a review checklist that will be maintained by the Crime Lab. The Crime Lab will also incorporate random reanalysis of samples and/or the inclusion of QC samples to verify the integrity of the data analyzed by a vendor laboratory under contract with the AK SCDL (DB QAS 17.4.1 and 17.4.2).

3.1.4 Forensic Casework Profiles

Profiles from biological samples found at the scene of the crime are entered into the Forensic Index of CODIS. As per the NDIS operational procedures, only forensic profiles that are attributable to the "putative perpetrator" may be entered into CODIS. Profiles or alleles unambiguously attributed to other individuals (i.e. victim, boyfriend, husband, known eliminations) are not acceptable. When there is ambiguity as to the origin of a profile or alleles, the profile may be entered if there is a possibility of the perpetrator being the source. CODIS analysts may refer to the NDIS Forensic Index Decision Tree (available on the CJIS-WAN) for assistance in determining whether or not a forensic profile may be entered into CODIS. Justification for entry of questionable samples should be documented in the comments section during data entry.

A forensic casework profile that matches a suspect may be entered into CODIS. If the DNA results in a case indicate that only one perpetrator is involved, only the most complete or most probative STR profile for that case matching the suspect will be entered into CODIS. Additional profiles appearing to be from the same suspect, but with less genetic data, will not be entered into CODIS.

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In forensic cases involving more than one perpetrator, more than one STR profile may be entered into CODIS if the probative profiles from different items of evidence are found to be consistent with different individuals.

The steps below outline the procedure for entering a forensic profile into CODIS:

- a. Open STR Data Entry
- b. Enter Specimen ID as in the following example:
U04-0652 55KC
 - “U” represents a sample whose source is unknown
 - If the source has been identified in casework, no “U” is entered)
 - 04-0652 is the lab case #
 - 55KC is the lab item # (may have the # sign in front of the item)
- c. Select the appropriate Specimen Category (typically **Forensic Unknown** for single-source profiles or **Forensic Mixture** for mixtures)
- d. Verify the name of the analyst entering the profile
- e. Case ID is left blank
- f. Select Yes or No for Source ID
- g. Select Yes or No for Partial Profile (yes indicates partial data at any locus; not to be used for complete locus dropout)
- h. In Comments, enter the agency name, type of case and other pertinent information
- i. Enter the first and second readings, verifying that there are no discrepancies between the readings, and save the entry
- k. It is optional to [search the profile at this time using Searcher](#). This may be done using the Search button. If there is a match, identifying the source of the sample, the source ID is changed to Yes and the profile saved again. Samples not searched manually will be searched as part of the weekly autosearch.
- l. Print 2 copies of the Specimen Detail Report. One copy is reviewed (refer to [section 3.1](#) of this document) and then initialed and dated by the technical reviewer for retention in the case record. The second copy is provided to the State Administrator upon completion of the review. This signals to the Administrator that the sample may be searched and uploaded to NDIS, if eligible.

3.1.5 Forensic Mixtures

A forensic mixture profile composed of alleles from more than one individual may be suitable for entry into CODIS if all or part of the profile may be attributed to the putative perpetrator(s). The DNA analyst should evaluate the profile using their experience in interpreting STR results to determine whether that profile is appropriate for entry into

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A forensic mixture profile is not appropriate for entry into CODIS if it is concluded that a search of this profile will result in a large number of ambiguous offender hits, or that such a profile will frequently become an ambiguous candidate when searches are made of forensic profiles. The CODIS analyst may choose to first search the profile in Searcher to assess the number of hits that will be returned if the profile is entered into CODIS. Samples not searched manually will be searched as part of the weekly autosearch. Additional information on the Searcher program is contained in the CODIS Training Manual and in [Section 3.3](#) of this manual. Mixtures that do not result in a large number of ambiguous hits may then be entered via STR Data Entry. Only mixtures that comply with the 4 X 4 rule shall be offered to NDIS (as per the NDIS Operational Procedures). To comply with the 4 X 4 rule, a mixture profile shall contain no more than four alleles at any core locus and no more than four core loci shall contain more than two alleles.

The mixture profile should be evaluated to determine whether it is appropriate to enter the whole mixture profile, only the major or minor component, only those alleles clearly foreign to the victim, or not enter the profile into CODIS at all. When entering multiple alleles at one locus, the analyst may designate obligate alleles using a + sign after the allele. Only one obligate allele can be designated per locus. The goal is to capture the profile attributable to the "putative perpetrator." As necessary, the analyst may consult with a CODIS Administrator or another qualified analyst to make this determination. It is recognized that some mixture profiles are simply not suitable for entry into CODIS. Profiles that are not suitable for comparison or suitable for exclusions only (as per the Forensic Biology Discipline Procedure Manual) shall not be entered into CODIS.

When the method of entering the profile allows for the possibility of additional perpetrator alleles that were not entered, the analyst should indicate this with a Yes in the partial profile field. When alleles attributed to the victim or other known individuals are subtracted from the profile (intentionally not entered), this should be indicated in the Comments field.

3.1.6 Partial Profiles

For the purposes of CODIS, a partial profile is a profile in which possible allelic peaks from the perpetrator(s) are visualized below the reporting threshold (possible allelic dropout) at one or more core loci. The decision to enter partial profiles (with multiple missing alleles) into CODIS should be made with careful consideration. As with mixtures, the analyst may first search the profile with [Searcher](#) to determine if it is appropriate to enter into CODIS.

3.1.7 Profiles of Unidentified Human Remains and Relatives of Missing Persons

Profiles of unidentified human remains are entered into CODIS in the Specimen Category Unidentified Person. Source ID will initially be No for these samples. Relatives of Missing Persons may be entered into one of the following specimen categories with the Source ID marked Yes: Biological Child, Biological Father, Biological Mother, Biological Sibling, Maternal Relative or Paternal Relative. The Specimen ID for these samples consists of the laboratory case and item #s [as described above for forensic casework profiles](#).

3.1.8 Composite Profiles

Composite genetic profiles are defined as being created by combining typing results from multiple injections of a single amplification and/or multiple amplifications of a single DNA extract. The AK SCDL allows for entry of composite profiles in SDIS when doing so is likely to have the impact of reducing the number of coincidental matches to a profile. Since statistical analysis of composite data is not currently permitted, a composite genetic profile should not be entered into CODIS when the reportable STR results are not suitable for comparison or are suitable only for exclusions (see Data Interpretation section of the Forensic Biology Discipline Procedures Manual). When composite genetic profiles are entered into CODIS, descriptive comments should be included in the comments section during STR data entry.

3.2 Administrative Removal / Expungement of Profiles

It is recognized that occasionally a profile that was previously entered into CODIS will need to be removed or expunged. A CODIS Administrator will promptly delete a profile from a Convicted Offender (including a juvenile) or Arrestee upon receipt of a court order to expunge (in accordance with AS44.41.035, DNA Identification Act of 1994, DNA Analysis Backlog Elimination Act of 2000, and DNA Fingerprint Act of 2005), if the individual does not have another offense that currently qualifies them for inclusion in the database.

Expungement is the removal of a DNA record at the state and/or national index levels in response to the following:

A court order that has overturned an offender's conviction for a qualifying offense.

A court order establishing that charges were dismissed or resulted in acquittal, or no charges were filed within the time period established by the court order.

An *Expungement Checklist* is to be started any time a court order directing deletion of a profile from a Convicted Offender (including a juvenile) or Arrestee is received. A

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CODIS Administrator will search LIMS to determine if the laboratory has a DNA database sample(s) from the individual and/or a profile has been entered into CODIS.

If no samples are located and no profile has been entered, a letter is sent to the originator of the expungement request indicating that the laboratory does not have any offender samples from the individual and no profile has been entered. This letter may be authored by a CODIS Administrator or the laboratory legal assistant.

If any samples are located and/or a profile has been entered, the AK SCDL legal assistant will be asked to search for any currently qualifying offenses. If any are found, this is noted on the checklist. The CODIS Administrator or laboratory legal assistant will provide the department's legal counsel with information relating to the expungement order and any qualifying offense that is outside the scope of the expungement order. All DNA samples, DNA profiles, and personal information are to be retained by the laboratory until a course of action is determined by the department's legal counsel. If department legal counsel directs that a profile be deleted and/or samples destroyed, the CODIS administrator (or designee) will proceed with expungement as described below.

If no other qualifying offense is identified, the CODIS administrator (or designee) will retrieve the offender information card and DNA sample, transfer custody of the sample to him/herself and then disposition the sample as destroyed. If a DNA profile has been entered into CODIS, details of the reason for removal should be placed in the Comments section of the specimen record and the specimen deleted from CODIS.

- a. Locate the sample in Specimen Manager, highlight the specimen and then click on the STR Data Entry icon in the toolbar.
- b. The specimen will open in STR Data Entry where the comments can be recorded. These comments will be captured on the SDIS Specimen Deletion Report.
- c. Save the specimen and close STR Data Entry.
- d. Right-click on the specimen in Specimen Manager and select Delete Specimen from the drop down menu. The corresponding SDIS Specimen Deletion Report will be retained for documentation purposes.
- e. If the profile of the specimen requiring administrative removal / expungement has been uploaded to NDIS, deletion from NDIS will occur at the upload session immediately following specimen deletion from SDIS. Reconciliation reports documenting the specimen's removal from NDIS will be maintained along with the other relevant documentation.

The personal information record in LIMS will also be expunged. This is accomplished by locating the offender's record and removing the name, date of birth and APSIN (State ID) number in the Individuals tab. The record is then secured by right mouse clicking on the Case Info tab in LIMS and selecting Restrict Case. This should only be done by the Laboratory Manager or a CODIS Administrator.

The buccal sample is placed in the trash (biohazard receptacle if a blood sample) and the print portion of the card is shredded. Both of these steps must be witnessed and recorded. A letter indicating compliance with the order to expunge will be sent to the originator of the expungement request (See Figure 1).

The court order to expunge, the *Expungement Checklist*, Specimen Deletion Reports from CODIS and a copy of the letter indicating compliance will be maintained by a CODIS Administrator.

When records for offenders are expunged/removed, R&I should be notified to reset the appropriate flag in APSIN (if the card was previously sent to R&I for latent verification). This notification may be done by encrypted e-mail. A record of this communication will be maintained with the other related paperwork.

3.2.1 Samples Collected for Non-Qualifying Offenses

Occasionally, a sample received by the laboratory for entry into CODIS is destroyed prior to being logged into LIMS. Typically, this occurs when the laboratory becomes aware, prior to the sample being logged into LIMS, that the individual does not have a qualifying offense. A record of these samples (individual's name and date of birth) is maintained by a CODIS Administrator. These samples do not require an *Expungement Checklist* and destruction of these samples does not need to be witnessed.

Prior to reporting a CODIS hit, the qualifying offense for the offender must be verified. If it is determined that the sample was collected for a non-qualifying offense, the sample will be destroyed and the individual's record secured in LIMS. Removal of these samples from LIMS and CODIS is accomplished by the same procedure as an expungement, except that notification is not required upon completing the removal. If it is determined that the sample was collected for a qualifying offense, but is eligible for expungement in accordance with AS44.41.035, the laboratory may retain the sample and related records as long as no court order for expungement has been received by the laboratory.

3.2.2 Samples Determined not to be from the Putative Perpetrator

Additionally, forensic samples in CODIS that are later identified as originating from someone other than the putative perpetrator must be removed from CODIS. Prior to deleting a specimen, details of the reason for removal should be placed in the Comments section of the specimen record as described above. The corresponding SDIS Specimen Deletion Report will be placed in the case record (hard copy or electronic) for documentation purposes. These administrative removals do not require an *Expungement Checklist*.

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As previously indicated, if the profile of the specimen requiring administrative removal / expungement has been uploaded to NDIS, deletion from NDIS will occur at the upload session immediately following specimen deletion from SDIS. Reconciliation reports documenting the specimen's removal from NDIS will be maintained along with the other relevant documentation.

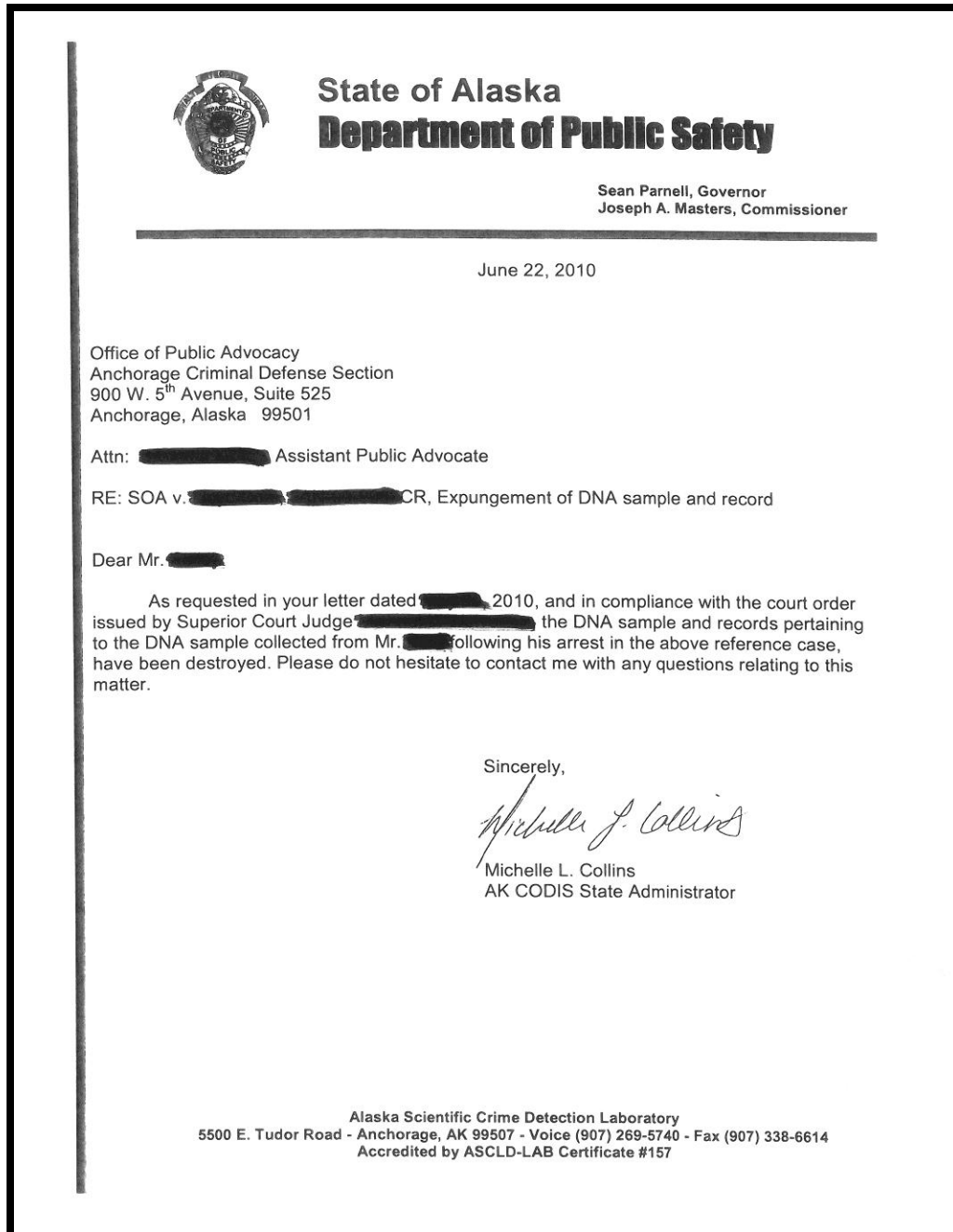


Figure 1. Letter Indicating Compliance with Expungement Request

3.3 Searching the CODIS Indices

The Searcher and Autosearcher programs are the CODIS software modules that permit the searching of DNA profiles from various indices against other DNA profiles. Different search configurations are used depending on the type of sample being searched. Searches are conducted in accordance with federal/state law and the NDIS procedures. Detailed information on the use of these programs is contained in the CODIS Software training manual (provided during the FBI sponsored software training class).

3.3.1 Use of Searcher at the time of data entry

Upon entering a new forensic or offender sample into CODIS, the CODIS analyst may perform a search of the appropriate sample indices for potential matches between the new sample and samples already in the database. Manual searching is not required since Autosearches are scheduled to run nightly.

Typically, forensic profiles can be searched with the default configuration. The default search configuration requires that a forensic profile have 10 of the 13 core loci to be searched. Matches will be returned for samples with at least nine loci that match at moderate stringency. When searched with these search parameters, some forensic profiles (such as mixture profiles, partial profiles, and profiles that are homozygous at several loci) may result in a large number of ambiguous candidate matches. The search stringency may be customized to high at some loci to allow for a more efficient search. If a sample has less than 10 loci, the analyst will need to modify the configuration to require less than 10 loci to report a match. Customization of the search stringency must be done with careful consideration. The main goal is to not erroneously eliminate the actual perpetrator from the pool of candidates by improper stringency customization when the search is conducted. CODIS analysts may seek the assistance of a CODIS Administrator or another qualified analyst for non-routine searches.

If no matches are returned, other than to the sample itself, the analyst can close Searcher without saving the matches. If possible matches are returned, the analyst should save the results to Match Manager. The analyst will then assess each possible match by a locus to locus comparison and disposition matches in the disposition window. Matches may also be dispositioned by a CODIS Administrator. Candidate matches, at less than high stringency, between an offender and an unknown forensic specimen or between two forensic specimens (at least one in which the source is unknown) require assessment by two qualified analysts. Matches of the sample to itself are deleted. A list of possible dispositions is provided in [Section 3.5](#). If there is a forensic or offender hit (e.g., identifying the source of a sample that was previously unknown) the source ID should be changed to Yes and the specimen re-saved in STR Data Entry.

Match detail reports will be printed out for all matches that cannot be immediately dispositioned as conviction match, benchwork match or offender duplicate. Match detail reports for matches ultimately dispositioned as forensic and offender hits will be maintained with the case record(s). Section 3.6 contains information on match confirmation and reporting of forensic and offender hits.

3.3.2 Use of Autosearcher

An autosearch of the database is performed to detect possible matches not previously identified by the CODIS analysts. Several autosearch configurations are available depending on the purpose of the search. Autosearches to identify offender duplicates and casework matches are scheduled to run automatically. A CODIS Administrator will assess and disposition matches resulting from autosearches. Configurations in addition to those discussed below may be used on a case by case basis.

Matches identified using Searcher will be identified again with Autosearcher. These duplicate matches are dispositioned as "Duplicate" in CODIS, referencing the original match in the disposition comments.

3.3.2.1 Duplicate Offenders

The Duplicate Offender configuration is used to search for offenders with more than one offender sample in CODIS. This search is performed after an upload of an offender batch to SDIS, and before the batch is uploaded to NDIS. A minimum of 5% of the samples in an offender batch should be quality control samples. These will typically be samples for which a duplicate offender sample already exists in the CODIS database, but may also be staff samples placed randomly in a batch. The results of the duplicate offender search will be checked to verify that the matching samples are indeed duplicate samples from the same offender, or in rare cases, samples from identical twins. This check may involve a latent examiner doing a comparison of the thumbprints from the database cards.

Once the samples are verified as duplicates, for matches between two convicted offenders, the specimen category of the sample with the higher specimen ID number will be changed from Convicted Offender to CO Duplicate. When the match is between a convicted offender sample and an arrestee sample, the specimen category for the arrestee is changed to CO Duplicate. CO Duplicates are not uploaded to NDIS. Therefore, if the CO Duplicate is the more complete profile, STR data can be transcribed to the non-duplicate sample to allow for upload to NDIS. This should be reflected in the comments section of the specimen. If a sample already at NDIS is changed to CO Duplicate, the sample is automatically unmarked and removed from the NDIS level upon the next upload from the state lab. This will be indicated on the next reconciliation report from NDIS.

The administrative review of a batch of offender samples must include a review of all matches resulting from an Offender Duplicate search. If the search results in a high stringency match between two samples that do not appear to be duplicates from the same individual (or identical twins), the Administrator and/or Technical Manager will be notified and available options will be discussed to discover the source of the discrepancy. Samples from the batch with the discrepancy will not be uploaded to NDIS until the discrepancy is resolved and/or approval is received from the DNA Technical Manager.

Once all matches from the search have been reconciled, Staff Duplicate samples (processed and uploaded as part of the minimum 5% quality assurance samples) and Staff Duplicate matches may be deleted.

3.3.2.2 AK New

The AK New configuration is used to search samples entered into CODIS since the last autosearch. This search is typically performed by a CODIS Administrator and searches all of the indices except Relatives of Missing Persons.

All candidate matches generated in Autosearcher are saved to Match Manager automatically. A CODIS Administrator or other qualified DNA analyst will assess each possible match by a locus to locus comparison and disposition the match in Match Manager. Candidate matches, at less than high stringency, between an offender and an unknown forensic specimen or between two forensic specimens (at least one in which the source is unknown) require assessment by two qualified analysts. If there is a hit identifying the source of a sample that was previously unknown, the source ID is changed to Yes.

Match detail reports for forensic and offender hits are maintained with the case record(s). [Section 3.6](#) contains information on confirmation and reporting of intrastate forensic and offender hits.

3.3.3 Search Requests from/to Agencies Outside of Alaska

Occasionally, the lab receives requests from law enforcement and other agencies outside the State of Alaska for searches of the Alaska database. Requests from the FBI and other CODIS Administrators may be searched. The request must be received on the DNA Search Request by Facsimile Official Form (or current version available on the CJIS-WAN). All such requests will be directed to the State Administrator, or designee, who will process the search request. The NDIS batch target file on the CJIS-WAN may also be searched by the State Administrator.

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When a request is received from someone in another state, other than the state's CODIS Administrator, the person will be asked to contact their state's CODIS Administrator to have the request made. Alternatively, the Alaska State Administrator may contact the other state's administrator to discuss the request.

Routinely, only profiles with six or more loci in common with the STR loci utilized by the AK SCDL will be searched. However, at the discretion of the State Administrator fewer than six loci may be searched.

The search request and any written response to the request will be maintained by the State Administrator in LIMS. CODIS matches generated as a result of such requests will be verified and reported in the manner outlined in [Section 3.6](#), with due consideration given to the specific needs of the requesting agency.

Requests can be made by law enforcement agencies within the State of Alaska for searches of the CODIS Indices of other states. For example, a forensic unknown may contain less than 10 CODIS core loci and is therefore ineligible for uploading and searching at NDIS. In addition, other state databases may contain samples not acceptable at NDIS.

The request, made in writing or verbally, will be brought to the attention of the State Administrator, who will make the official written request for the search. The State Administrator, or designee, may either contact other State Administrators directly, to search the profile, or may seek to have the profile added to the batch target file on the CJIS-WAN. Requests to other State Administrators will be made in writing, using the DNA Search Request by Facsimile Official Form (or current version available on the CJIS-WAN). All documentation related to such requests will be maintained in the case record in LIMS.

CODIS matches generated as a result of such requests will be verified and reported in the manner outlined in [Section 3.6](#) using information provided in writing by the other state. The search results and other information regarding the match received from the other state(s) will be maintained in the case record.

Requests can be made by law enforcement agencies within the State of Alaska for a search of the DNA databases of foreign countries via Interpol. The request, made in writing or verbally, will be documented in the case record and brought to the attention of the State Administrator, who will make the official request.

3.4 Uploading data to NDIS

DNA profiles that meet NDIS criteria as well as criteria specified in this document may be subsequently uploaded to NDIS.

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In accordance with NDIS requirements, the following information from all AK SCDL CODIS users (defined by NDIS as personnel who have log on access to the CODIS server and/or are qualified DNA analysts who are responsible for producing the DNA profiles stored in NDIS) will be provided to the FBI for security clearance. Only data from users authorized by the FBI will be entered into CODIS.

- FD-484: Privacy Act Explanation
- FD-258: Fingerprint (10 Print) Card, two copies
- FD-816: Background Data Information Form
- CODIS User Information Form

Only data in SDIS that complies with the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the FBI and the Department of Public Safety, the NDIS Procedures Manual, the NDIS Standards for Acceptance of DNA Data, and the FBI's "Quality Assurance Standards for Forensic DNA Testing Laboratories" and "Quality Assurance Standards for DNA Databasing Laboratories" will be uploaded to NDIS.

The State Administrator, or designee, will be responsible for uploading eligible DNA profiles to NDIS. Alaska does not collect or upload profiles from suspects or juvenile arrestees to NDIS. NDIS has currently scheduled uploads from Alaska to occur on Tuesday. The upload schedule may be changed at the discretion of the NDIS custodian.

STR profiles from forensic samples that can be "attributed to the putative perpetrator" and contain results at 10 or more of the CODIS core STR loci (CSF1PO, D3S1358, D5S818, D7S820, D8S1179, D13S317, D16S539, D18S51, D21S11, FGA, TH01, TPOX, and vWA) are uploaded to NDIS. New Convicted Offender and Arrestee profiles, with data at all 13 of the core STR loci, are uploaded to NDIS. Profiles from unidentified human remains, missing persons and relatives of missing persons must contain the Amelogenin locus to be uploaded to NDIS. D2S1338, D19S433, Penta E and Penta D are accepted, but not searched at NDIS.

The specimen detail report of a sample at SDIS must be reviewed by a second qualified individual before the sample will be uploaded to NDIS. Upon completion of the review, a copy of the specimen detail report is provided to an Administrator. Prior to an NDIS upload, the Administrator will ensure that all specimens meeting the NDIS criteria and for which technical review has been completed, are marked for upload. The Administrator will also ensure that no specimens are marked that do not meet NDIS eligibility requirements or for which technical review has not been completed. Typically, the upload will be an Incremental Upload, except when Full uploads are specifically requested by NDIS or the FBI contractor.

Once an upload has been processed by the NDIS custodian, a reconciliation report will be received via DNA Comm. The State Administrator will print the report and reconcile it with database batch worksheets and with the Specimen Detail Reports provided by the

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DNA analysts. The alternate administrator will also review the reconciliation reports to confirm the upload of eligible forensic profiles to NDIS. This review is indicated by the alternate's initials on the first page of the report. Reconciliation reports are maintained by the State Administrator in LIMS.

All complete DNA profiles uploaded to NDIS are searched by NDIS against the eligible DNA profiles from other states. Typically, this search is conducted weekly.

Matches obtained as a result of such searches will be sent automatically via the CJIS-WAN to SDIS. Potential matches are received via DNA Comm. These matches will be reviewed by the State Administrator, or designee, who will communicate with the other laboratory agencies and the AK SCDL analysts to ensure timely disposition, verification and reporting of any hits.

The evaluation and verification of NDIS hits will be in accordance with the NDIS procedure "Confirm an Interstate Candidate Match" (most current version, published by the FBI, US-DOJ), and Sections [3.6.3](#) and [3.6.4](#) of this document, with due consideration given to the requirements of the other state(s) involved in the NDIS match.

3.5 Match Dispositions

Matches are assessed and dispositioned by a CODIS Administrator or a qualified DNA analyst. Matches that have not been viewed show the disposition as Candidate Match. Once a match has been viewed, the disposition changes to Pending. Matches should be assigned one of the following dispositions (by right-clicking on the match) as soon as possible after it has been assessed and/or confirmed:

Waiting for more loci – this disposition is used when additional DNA analysis is required before determining if the profiles do indeed match

Offender hit – this disposition is used when a forensic sample whose source is unknown matches a convicted offender or arrestee sample. This disposition is used only when the offender is the putative perpetrator (i.e. not the consensual sex partner of the victim of a sexual assault, etc.)

Forensic hit – this disposition is used when two forensic samples, at least one of which the source has not been previously identified, match each other. The source(s) of both samples may be unknown or one of the sources may have already been identified.

Benchmark match - this disposition is used when two forensic samples, whose origins have already been determined and are the same, match to each other when searched in CODIS.

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Conviction match – this disposition is used when a forensic sample whose source was previously identified, either in casework or by a previous CODIS hit, matches to an offender/arrestee sample from the same individual.

Offender duplicate – this disposition is used when two different offender samples from the same individual match to each other.

Investigative information - this disposition is assigned when an offender matches to a forensic sample, but the offender is not a putative perpetrator (i.e. consensual sex partner).

Duplicate match – this disposition is used for duplicated matches (i.e. samples match in Searcher and then again in Autosearcher)

User defined – the dispositions identified as User Defined #1, #2 and #3 are available for the CODIS lab to assign when matches arise that are not defined by any of the other available dispositions. In the AK SCDL, these are defined as below. User defined dispositions should not be used for matches occurring at NDIS.

User defined #1 – this disposition is used when a sample that was searched as a 1 time keyboard search hits to another sample in the database.

User defined #2 – this disposition is used when a volunteer sample hits to a forensic sample in the database

User defined #3 – this disposition is used when two samples that match with high stringency are not from the same individual or an identical twin (i.e. a bone marrow donor and recipient)

No match – this disposition is used when it is determined that the two profiles do not match

Twins – this disposition is used when two samples that match in the database are determined to be from identical twins.

Siblings - this disposition is used when two samples that match in the database are determined to be from siblings (often this is not known and the match is called a No Match)

To ensure that all matches have been reviewed and properly dispositioned, the State Administrator will generate a list of matches for a given month, and their dispositions. This list will be provided to the alternate administrator for review. The alternate administrator will confirm that all matches have been viewed and that action has been taken to disposition each match. The alternate administrator will confirm the

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dispositions of Alaska casework matches dispositioned as No match and all moderate stringency Alaska casework matches. This report will be initialed by the alternate Administrator and maintained in LIMS by the State Administrator. This reconciliation is not an audit requirement and need not occur immediately at the end of the month.

The State Administrator will periodically run queries for matches with discrepant dispositions and matches that still require a final disposition. These matches should be reconciled whenever possible.

3.6 Confirming and Reporting a Candidate Match (DB QAS 9.4; DB QAS 11.2.2.1; DB QAS 12.1)

Some CODIS hits require further verification before the hit can be reported to the agency/investigator. The extent to which a hit requires verification depends on whether the hit is a Warm hit or a Cold hit. A Warm hit is one where the samples were previously suspected to originate from the same source. For example, forensic samples from unsolved burglaries with similar MOs (modus operandi) or a forensic sample from an assault victim matches an offender sample from a named suspect for whom no reference sample was available. A Cold hit is one in which there was no prior indication that the cases or individuals may be related.

When one or both of the matching samples are mixtures, verification may require reviewing the electropherograms from which the profiles were obtained. Assessment of casework matches at less than high stringency must be conducted by two qualified DNA analysts, as defined in the NDIS procedures. If the match results in the identification of the source of a sample that was previously unknown, the source ID for that sample is changed to Yes. If at least one probative source of DNA remains unidentified, the source ID remains No. A comment is added to the specimen record regarding the identification of one source.

Whenever possible, candidate matches should be resolved and reported, if appropriate, within 30 days. In general, the casework analyst that identifies the match or that worked a case involved in the match is responsible for initiating the confirmation process and authoring the hit letter. All CODIS hit letters require an administrative review prior to release.

CODIS match detail reports for candidate matches determined to be hits will be maintained in the relevant case records in LIMS. CODIS dispositions should be updated by the individual receiving relevant communications or issuing the hit letter. All communications, written and verbal, related to candidate matches will be maintained in the case activities in LIMS. Sample communications for requesting confirmations from other labs and for reporting hits can be found in the NDIS operational procedures for confirming interstate and intrastate candidate matches, and in this manual. These letters may be modified and customized, as needed.

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Anytime a CODIS hit letter is issued, the final hit disposition and number of investigations aided will be recorded in the appropriate record in LIMS. The analyst will click on the Case Activities button on the Case Info tab, scope the activity using the Context drop down menus (as shown in Figure 2), and select the appropriate disposition in the Activity drop down menu. Investigations aided, if applicable, are recorded on the Testimony drop down menu (as shown in Figure 3). For intrastate forensic hits, a hit is only recorded in one of the case records. In the other record, the activity is recorded as Investigative Information. The original match date is recorded as the start date for the activity. The end date is the date the hit letter is drafted. If a match disposition is modified after receiving additional information, this may be recorded in the notes field. Guidelines for determining hit dispositions and investigations aided are contained in this manual and in flowcharts in the NDIS operational procedures (available to CODIS users on the CJIS-WAN).

Every effort is made to ensure that only qualifying forensic and offender samples are entered into the database. The AK SCDL presumes that agencies submitting offender samples to the laboratory collect only from individuals who qualify under Alaska Statute. The laboratory verifies that an individual has a qualifying offense prior to releasing personal information associated with a database hit.

If a match occurs involving an offender sample that was not collected for a qualifying offense, the identification of the offender associated with the match will not be reported and no further confirmation is required. The match is dispositioned as investigative information (in CODIS) and the offender record (DNA profile and all personal information) will be removed from the LIMS system as described in [Section 3.2](#).

If a match occurs involving an offender sample that was legally collected, but for which a qualifying offense no longer exists, the laboratory may release information relating to the match as long as a court order to expunge the sample has not been received. The DNA profile and personal information are retained until a court order to expunge is received by the laboratory.

If a match occurs with a forensic sample whose source is known, but that is determined to be ineligible for CODIS (i.e. consent partner, witness, elimination sample, not likely to be a perpetrator, etc.), the match in CODIS is dispositioned as Investigative Information. Details of the match will not be provided to law enforcement (or another laboratory) and the ineligible forensic sample will be removed from CODIS. Additional information on removing a specimen from CODIS is given in [Section 3.2](#).

Apparent conviction matches (defined in [Section 3.5](#)) with other states can be verified verbally or by e-mail with the other State Administrator. At a minimum, the name and date of birth of the offender should be verified. This communication is noted in the

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match disposition notes in CODIS. These matches are dispositioned as such in CODIS and no action is required in LIMS.

Service Activity for Agencys Case No. 09-0001

Context

Laboratory LAB

Department Biology/DNA

Service CODIS Hit Letter

Lab Rep Collins, Michelle

Activity Information **Subpoenas**

Activity [Dropdown]

Sub Activity [Dropdown]

Time Spent [Dropdown]

Started [Dropdown]

Testimony [Dropdown]

☐ Subpoena Issued

Notes

[Text Area]

Figure 2. Recording match dispositions in LIMS

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Service Activity for Agency Case No. 09-0001

Context

Laboratory LAB

Department Biology/DNA

Service CODIS Hit Letter

Lab Rep Collins, Michelle

Activity Information

Activity NDIS Offender Hit-AK Case

Sub Activity

Time Spent 0.00 minutes **Qty** 0

Started 12/23/2009 **Completed** 12/23/2009

Testimony DNA-One Investigation Aided

Notes

Not needed
Testified
DNA-One Investigation Aided
DNA-Two Investigations Aided

Figure 3. Recording investigations aided in LIMS

3.6.1 Intrastate Forensic hits (reference Figure 4 flowchart)

Possible matches between two forensic profiles are first assessed to determine if the profiles were appropriate for entry into CODIS and can be reasonably thought to originate from the same source.

If the samples are determined to match, are eligible for CODIS, and the source of at least one of the samples is unknown, a CODIS hit letter request is created in LIMS and the cases are related. When the cases are from the same agency, the request is created in the case record of the unsolved case or, if both cases are unsolved, in the case record of the most recent case. When multiple agencies are involved, CODIS hit letter requests are created in both case records. The hit is only recorded in the case activities (in LIMS) of one of the cases (the unsolved case or, if both cases are unsolved, the most recent case). In the other case record, the activity is recorded as Investigative Information. An investigation aided is recorded for each unsolved case (provided it has not previously been counted in a prior hit). The CODIS hit letter(s) contain, at a minimum, the following information: the match level, the agency(ies) and agency case numbers involved in the match, and item numbers and brief descriptions of the items. The hit letter(s) includes a request that the agency representative(s) contact the laboratory to advise of the status of the case(s) and the probative nature of the match (as shown in Figure 5). The match is counted as a forensic hit (and is dispositioned as such in CODIS and LIMS) unless the laboratory is notified that the case has previously been solved or that the source of the sample is not a putative perpetrator.

If the source has been previously identified in both of the forensic cases, a CODIS match letter request(s) is created instead of a CODIS hit letter request(s). The letter(s) contain the same information as described in the previous paragraph except that no additional agency contact is requested. The match is dispositioned as Investigative Information in CODIS and no hit activities are recorded in LIMS.

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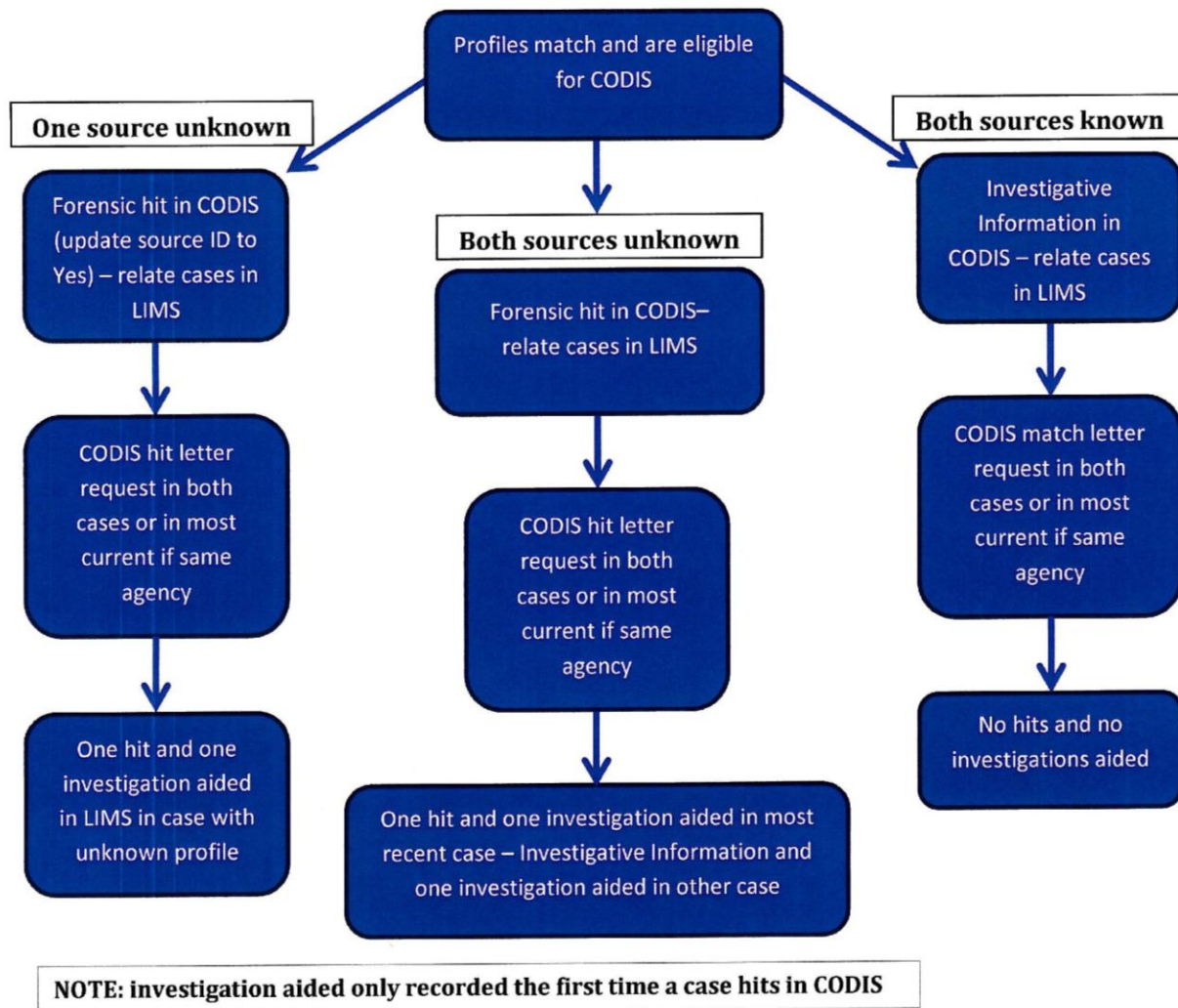


Figure 4. Flowchart for Intrastate Forensic Hit

3.6.2 Intrastate Offender hits (reference Figure 6 flowchart)

Possible offender hits are first assessed to determine if the profiles were appropriate for entry into CODIS. This assessment includes verification of a qualifying offense for the offender, and that there is a reasonable possibility that the samples originated from the same source.

If the samples are determined not to match, no letter is sent to the agency and the match is dispositioned in CODIS as No Match. No action is required in LIMS. If the offender was not collected for a qualifying offense or does not have a currently qualifying offense, proceed as described in [Section 3.6](#).

Hit letters involving offenders who were juveniles at the time of the offense should also be sent to an appropriate contact at the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Language may be added to the hit letters recommending that law enforcement agencies communicate with DJJ regarding the offense.

3.6.2.1 Cold hits

If the match is determined to be a cold hit (i.e. to an offender who was not a named suspect) and the offender's profile has not been previously verified, a CODIS confirmation request is created in LIMS under the offender record and a CODIS hit letter request is created in LIMS under the forensic case record. The match detail report and individual report from LIMS (with documentation of the qualifying offense) are picked up by the next available analyst, who will obtain the offender sample and perform STR analysis to confirm the profile associated with the match. A CODIS Administrator and/or DNA Technical Manager may sign off on a profile confirmation when less than a complete profile is obtained. If the offender's profile has been previously confirmed, either via another offender sample or a casework known, a CODIS confirmation request is not required.

Prior to issuing the hit letter for a cold hit, the DNA unit will also confirm whether the identity of the offender has been verified via the thumbprints submitted with the Database Collection Kit. Verification may be done by a qualified latent print analyst in the laboratory or by the department's Records & Identification unit. Print verification is indicated by the date and initials of the verifying examiner next to the prints or the APSIN number on the print card.

Once the profile and identity of the offender have been confirmed (to the extent possible), the CODIS hit letter may be drafted. The CODIS hit letter typically contains, at a minimum, the following information: the match level, the agency and agency case number, the agency item number and a brief description of the item, the name of the offender and at least one additional piece of personal information (i.e., date of birth, SSN, APSIN or other state ID number). The letter shall request that the agency

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representative(s) obtain a new sample from the offender and submit it to the laboratory for analysis and use in future legal proceedings (as shown in Figure 7). Additionally, the laboratory will request that the agency provide feedback regarding the current status of the case, and that laboratory be notified if the named offender is determined not to be the "putative perpetrator".

When a database sample was submitted without thumbprints, or the offender's print(s) could not be verified, the body of the letter will indicate that identity of the offender could not be verified by latent prints. When the submitted prints are matched to an offender other than the person named on the card, no hit letter will be issued until/unless the source of the discrepancy is resolved.

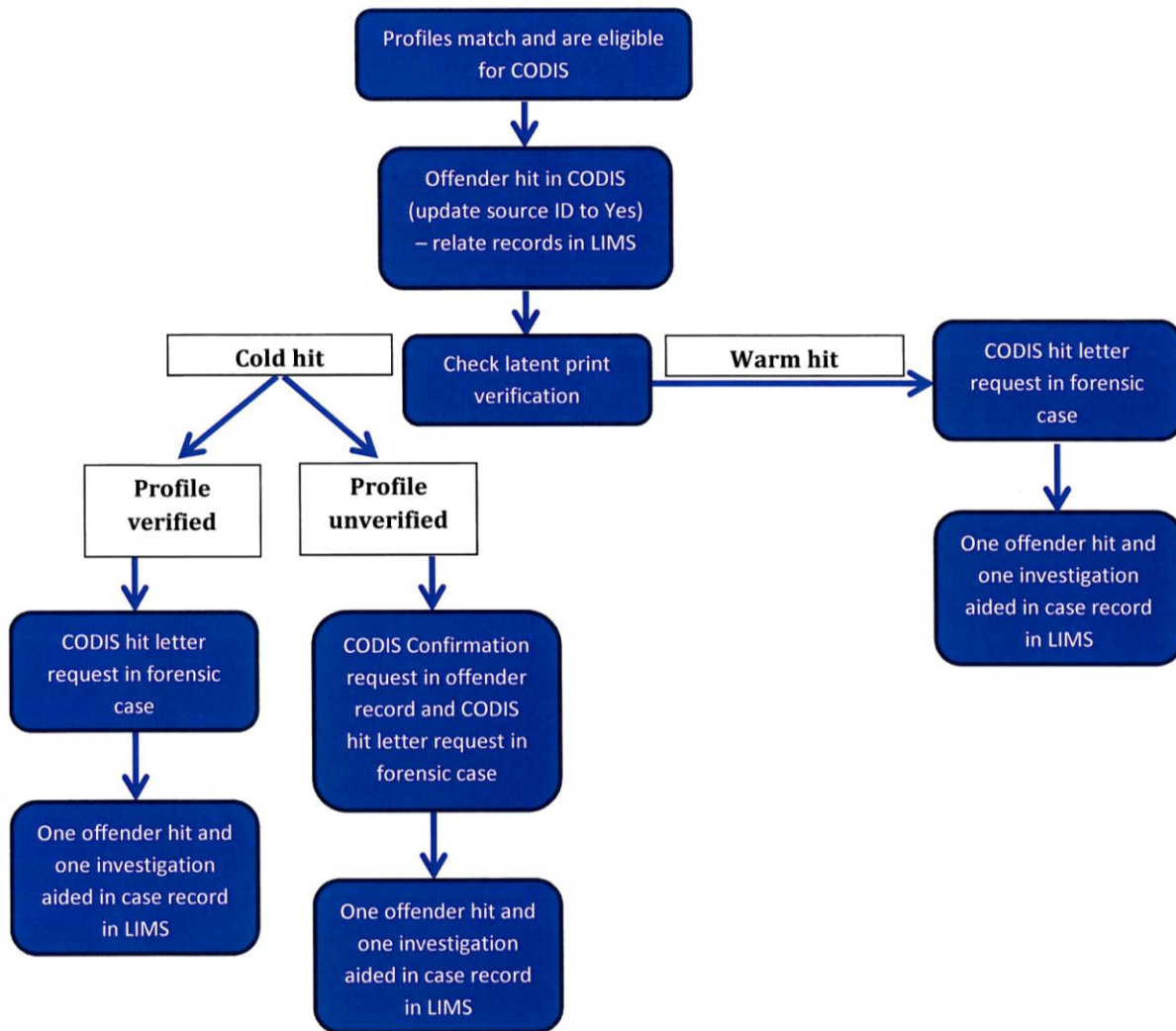
If the laboratory is later informed that a match is not probative (case was previously solved or the source of the DNA is not a putative perpetrator), the case activity (in LIMS) and disposition in CODIS are changed to Investigative Information. The Investigation Aided is removed from the activity in LIMS and appropriate notes are recorded.

If the DNA profile obtained during confirmation is not consistent with the profile already in the CODIS database, a CODIS Administrator shall be notified immediately. The administrator will notify the DNA Technical Manager and available options will be discussed to discover the source of the discrepancy. The hit letter will not be issued until/unless the discrepancy can be resolved and the hit confirmed. Similarly, the DNA Technical Manager will be consulted if a known forensic sample matches an offender whose identity is not consistent with the known source of the forensic sample.

If the identity discrepancy cannot be resolved, the agency will be notified in writing (may be an e-mail) and the hit letter request cancelled.

3.6.2.2 Warm hits

If the match is probative and to a named person for whom a reference sample was unavailable (i.e. a warm hit), no profile verification is required. An analyst or administrator will create a CODIS hit letter request in LIMS. Contents of the CODIS hit letter are as described above.



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Figure 6. Flowchart for Intrastate Offender Hit

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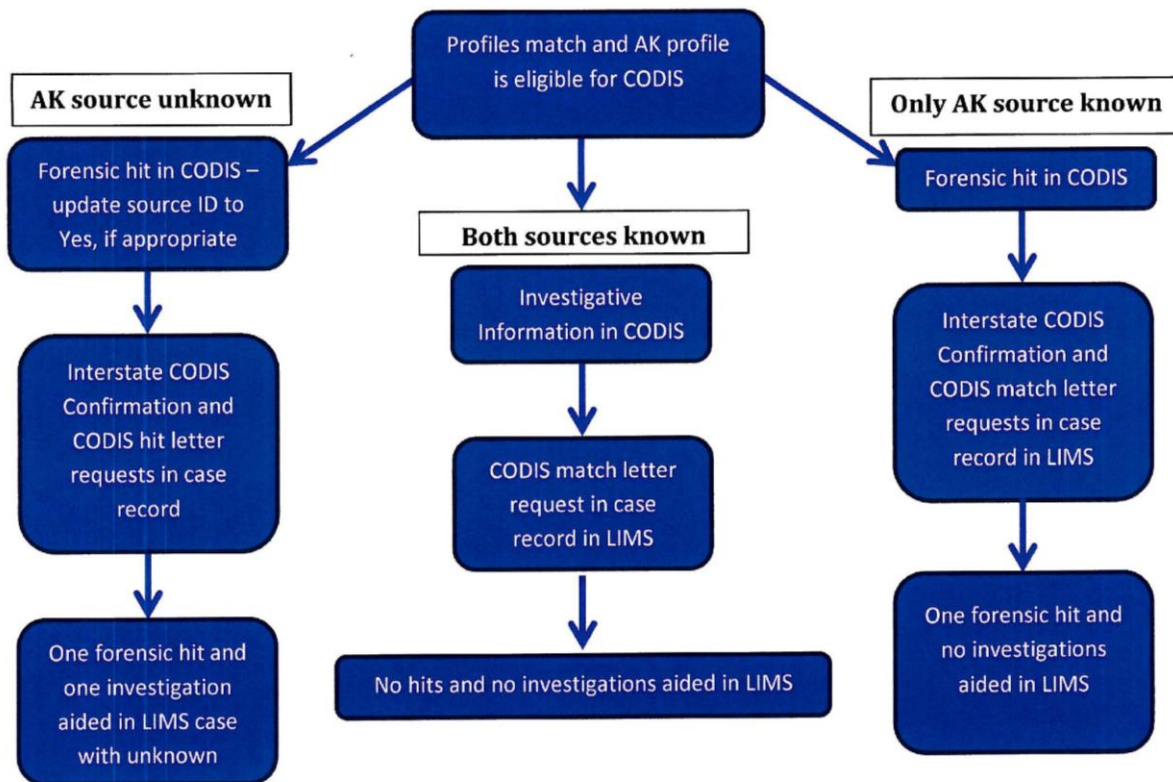
		State of Alaska Department of Public Safety SCIENTIFIC CRIME DETECTION LABORATORY	
		Sean Parnell, Governor Joseph A. Masters, Commissioner	
<hr/>			
June 23, 2011			
Requesting Agency:	Alaska Department of Public Safety	Laboratory Number:	09-0001
Agency File Number:	11-12345		
Report To:	George Washington		
Requested Service:	CODIS Hit Letter		
			
<p>During a search of the State of Alaska's DNA Index System (SDIS), a confirmed match occurred between a DNA profile obtained from AST/Palmer case #11-12345, item A678 (swab from bottle), and a sample submitted from offender John Doe, DOB 01/02/1965. The identity of the offender has been verified by latent prints.</p> <p>This letter is to inform you of a possible investigative lead. It is recommended that your agency obtain and submit to the Alaska Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory an additional biological specimen from this individual that could be used in future legal proceedings.</p> <p>Please provide the laboratory with information regarding the current status of this case and notify the laboratory if the offender named above is determined not to be a perpetrator in this case.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Collins, the CODIS State Administrator, at (907)269-5620 or michelle.collins@alaska.gov.</p>			
 			
Forensic Scientist IV: Michelle Collins			
Report Reviewed by Cheryl Duda			
5500 East Tudor Road		Anchorage, AK 99507	Voice (907) 269-5740 Fax (907) 338-6614
		Accredited by ASCLD-LAB Certificate #157	
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Figure 7. Sample Intrastate Offender Hit Letter

3.6.3 Interstate Forensic hits (reference Figure 8 flowchart)

As with intrastate forensic matches, possible interstate forensic matches are first assessed to determine if the profiles were appropriate for entry into CODIS and can be reasonably thought to have originated from the same source. Typically, the burden is on the laboratory with the unknown forensic profile to request confirmation of the match.



NOTE: investigation aided only recorded the first time a case hits in CODIS

Figure 8. Flowchart for Interstate Forensic Hit

3.6.3.1 Origin of Alaska sample is known

If the samples are determined to be a possible match and the source of the Alaska sample is known, the CODIS lab with the other forensic sample may be contacted (by e-mail or telephone) to determine the status of the forensic case in the other state. Alternatively, Alaska may receive a confirmation request from the other state. If the source of the sample from the other state is unknown, an Interstate CODIS Confirmation request is created in LIMS. The Administrator will report the relevant Alaska case and agency contact information to the other State Administrator. The letter typically contains, at a minimum, the following information: the match level, match ID and specimen IDs for both specimens, the requesting laboratory name, Alaska law enforcement agency case number, item number, brief item description (if available), name and birthdate of the putative perpetrator, and contact information for the Alaskan law enforcement agency (as shown in Figure 9). The match is dispositioned (in CODIS) as a forensic hit.

A CODIS match letter request is also created in LIMS. The CODIS match letter is sent to the Alaskan law enforcement agency and contains the match level, agency names, agency case numbers, item numbers, brief item description(s) (if available), and contact information for the law enforcement agency in the other state (as shown in Figure 10).

If it is determined that both cases involved in a forensic match were solved, prior to the CODIS match occurring, the match will be dispositioned (in CODIS) as Investigative Information. A CODIS match letter, as described in the previous paragraph, is still issued to the Alaskan law enforcement agency.

If it is determined that the Alaska sample is not eligible for CODIS entry or should have been removed previously, the department's legal representative (or another designated individual) will be consulted regarding the appropriate course of action. These situations will be addressed on a case by case basis. If it is determined that the match cannot be reported, the administrator for the other lab is notified, in writing, that the sample was not eligible for CODIS entry. The match will be dispositioned (in CODIS) as Investigative Information and appropriate comments included in LIMS.

3.6.3.2 Origin of Alaska sample is unknown

If the samples are determined to match and the source of the Alaska sample is unknown, the Alaska Administrator will create Interstate CODIS Confirmation and CODIS hit letter requests in LIMS. The match disposition (in CODIS) is changed to Forensic Hit. The Interstate CODIS Confirmation letter is issued to the Administrator for the other laboratory, requesting that confirmation of the match occur, and contains, at a minimum, the following information: match level, laboratory and agency contact information, match ID#, casework specimen ID #s for both specimens (see Figure 11). When the Alaska Administrator receives confirmation from the other state, a hit letter will be issued to the Alaska law enforcement agency and will contain, at a minimum, the following information: match level, the agency names, agency case numbers, item numbers and brief item descriptions (if available), and contact information for the agency outside of Alaska (see Figure 12). The letter may also contain information regarding the putative perpetrator, if provided by the other laboratory.

3.6.4 Interstate Offender hits

Possible offender hits are first assessed to determine if the profiles were appropriate for entry into CODIS (includes verification of a currently qualifying offense for the offender) and can be reasonably thought to originate from the same source. It is the responsibility of the lab with the forensic sample to determine if the candidate match requires confirmation and establish contact with the laboratory in the other state.

3.6.4.1 Alaskan offender sample (reference Figure 13 flowchart)

If the candidate match involves a qualifying Alaskan offender, the AK SCDL will proceed with confirmation of the match upon receiving a request from the administrator of the other laboratory involved in the match. If requested, match confirmation will proceed as described in [Section 3.6.2](#).


Once the profile and identity of the offender are confirmed (to the extent possible), the letter to the other state laboratory may be drafted. The letter typically contains, at a minimum, the following information: the match level, laboratory name, match ID and specimen IDs for both specimens, the name of the offender and at least one additional piece of personal information (i.e., date of birth, SSN, APSIN or other state ID number), and the offender's last known whereabouts (if available). A sample letter is shown in Figure 14.

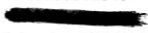

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	State of Alaska Department of Public Safety SCIENTIFIC CRIME DETECTION LABORATORY	Sean Parnell, Governor Joseph A. Masters, Commissioner
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June 17, 2011		
Requesting Agency:	Utah Bureau of Forensic Services	Laboratory Number: 09-0001
Agency File Number:	DC0000012345	
Report To:		
Requested Service:	Interstate CODIS Confirmation	

During a search of the National DNA Index System (NDIS), a match occurred between the following specimen numbers. Please begin the match confirmation process. Once the process is completed, please respond with the match disposition, the investigating agency's contact information, and information relating to the putative perpetrator, if available.

Match ID # DC0000012345
casework specimen ID # 12345 (AK0020200, swab from beer can)
to casework specimen ID # ABCdef

Agency contact information:
Case #09-1234; burglary
Detective John Deere
Anchorage Police Department
4501 Elmore Road
Anchorage, AK 99507
(907)786-8500



Forensic Scientist IV: Michelle Collins
Report Reviewed by Sara Graziano
5500 East Tudor Road Anchorage, AK 99507 Voice (907) 269-5740 Fax (907) 338-6614
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Figure 11. Sample Interstate Forensic Match Confirmation Request

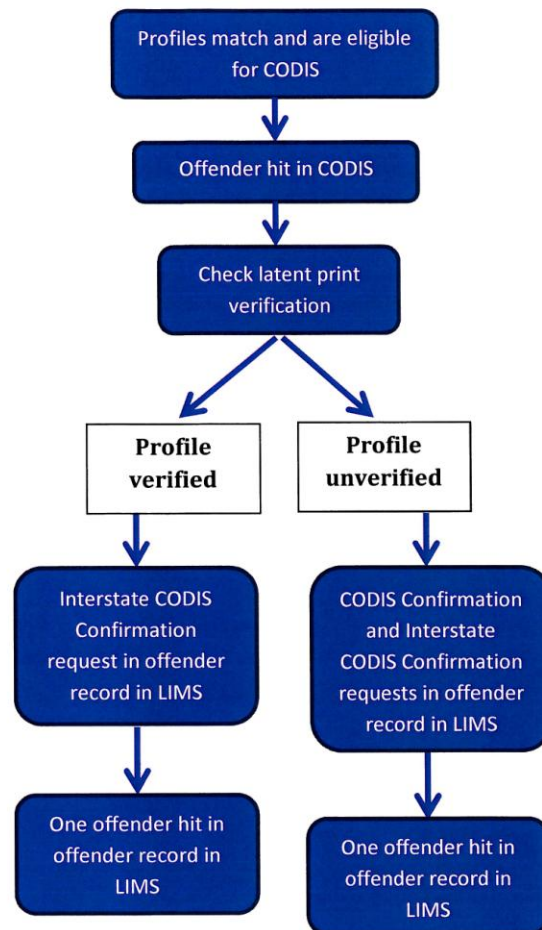


Figure 13. Flowchart for Interstate Offender Hit – Alaska offender

A match to an offender who does not have a currently qualifying offense, is handled as [previously described](#) in Section 3.6. The Administrator of the other state will be notified when the name of the offender cannot be released owing to the inability to verify a qualifying offense. This communication is noted in the match disposition notes in CODIS.

If the DNA profile obtained during verification is not consistent with the profile already in the CODIS database, proceed as described in [Section 3.6.2.1](#). If an agency requests confirmation and the identity discrepancy cannot be resolved, the agency will be notified in writing (may be an e-mail) and the hit letter request cancelled.

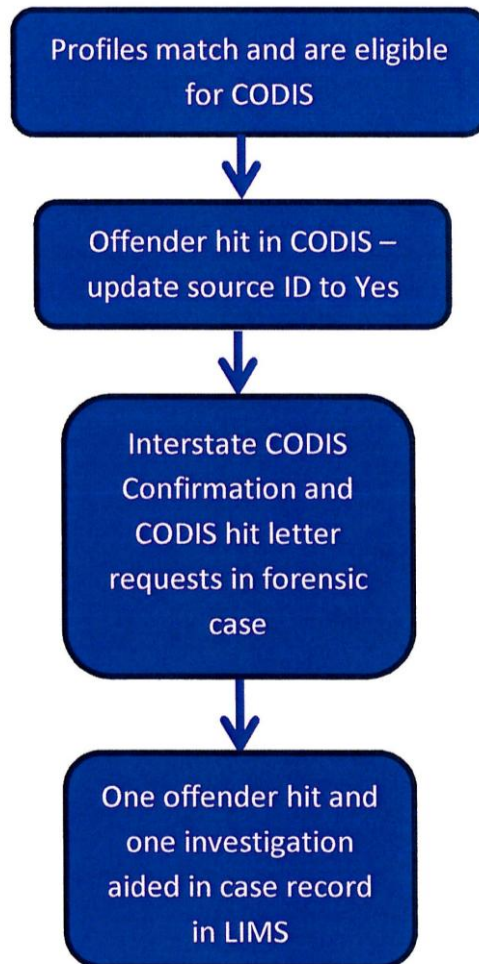
3.6.4.2 Alaskan forensic sample (reference Figure 15 flowchart)

If the candidate match involves a forensic sample from Alaska, a CODIS Administrator or designee must first verify that the samples match.

If the samples are determined to match and the Alaska sample is eligible to be in CODIS, an Interstate CODIS Confirmation request and a CODIS hit letter request are created in LIMS and the match disposition (in CODIS) is changed to Offender Hit. The Interstate CODIS Confirmation request is issued to the Administrator for the other laboratory, requesting that confirmation of the match occur, and contains, at a minimum, the following information: match level, laboratory name, match ID#, specimen ID #s for both specimens and the type of case (if known). A sample letter is shown in Figure 16. The hit and investigation aided are recorded in the case activities in LIMS.

When the Alaska Administrator receives confirmation from the other state, a hit letter will be issued to the Alaska law enforcement agency and will contain, at a minimum, the following information: match level, the agency name, agency case number, item number and brief item description (if available), offender name, state, last known whereabouts, and other relevant information provided by the confirming laboratory (see Figure 17). The letter shall request that the agency representative(s) obtain a new sample from the offender and submit it to the laboratory for analysis and use in future legal proceedings, and that the agency contact the laboratory should the match be determined to be to an individual other than the "putative perpetrator".

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NOTE: investigation aided only recorded the first time a case hits in CODIS

Figure 15. Flowchart for Interstate Offender Hit – Alaska forensic sample

3.7 Partial Matches and Familial Searching

Occasionally, a candidate match may occur between two samples where it is determined that the samples are not from the same source. However, based on the degree of similarity between the profiles, it is likely that the samples are from close biological relatives. Personally identifiable information will only be released when the two samples are determined to likely be from the same source. In instances where it is determined that the offender profile and the forensic profile are likely not from the same source, no information about the offender will be released. This applies to both intrastate and interstate matches.

Likewise, the laboratory will not request confirmation, or the release of personally identifiable information, for a partial match with another state.

Familial searching describes an attempt to identify the source of a forensic sample by searching the CODIS database for close biological relatives of the source. Familial searching is not currently performed by the AK SCDL.

3.8 Hit counting

One of the responsibilities of a CODIS Administrator is monthly reporting of the state's hits to NDIS. Hits for a calendar month should be reported on the CJIS-WAN by the 10th of the following month. After the 10th, hit counts can be e-mailed to the NDIS unit.

Hit counting is a complex process and the rules for counting hits and investigations aided are detailed in the NDIS Procedures.

3.9 CODIS Security and IT Users

The Department of Public Safety's Information Technology (IT) unit will have at least one individual who has been cleared by the FBI as a CODIS IT User. In coordination with the State Administrator, this person performs hardware and software updates/upgrades to the CODIS computers and backups of the data on the server. These duties may also be performed by the State Administrator. The CODIS IT User will also assist with troubleshooting computer issues that may arise in the daily operations of CODIS.

The CODIS server is housed in a locked room in the administrative section of the building. This room is accessible to limited laboratory staff and IT personnel. Login access to the server is restricted to authorized CODIS users. The CODIS router is located in the IT section of DPS. Two CODIS workstations are maintained at the laboratory. One workstation is with the State Administrator and the other is located in the DNA office. The server and workstations are not maintained on the network with other laboratory computers and do not have access to the internet.

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Full backups of the server are conducted approximately once a week, with differential backups conducted nightly. A CODIS IT User or CODIS Administrator will update virus definitions on the server and workstations as required.

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